



feedback

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Evaluation dioxin affair

Sharper sanctions required

Contaminated marl clay in a potato grading bath caused a dioxin affair last year. The source of the incident turned out to be a GMP+-certified company. The Product Board Animal Feed investigated the incident and acknowledged the positive parts of the approach and highlighted areas for improvement.

In October, routine monitoring in the dairy sector brought to light that potato peelings and steamed peelings contaminated with dioxin had been sold to the trade. The source was contaminated marl clay used in the washing and sorting process. Despite the contamination, it was quickly stated that there was no threat to animal or public health. The contaminated products were recalled. Research by the certifying body showed there were shortcomings in the risk assessment procedures and



The product board wants to prevent unnecessary blockages

in-coming inspections at the company in question, McCain. The company immediately took steps to remedy these problems. One of the measures was the introduction of stricter controls. For six months the company was subjected to a monthly, unannounced

audit by the certifying body.

This contamination incident has resulted in stricter guidelines for the production methods of potato peelings and steamed peelings. The assessment by the Product Board Animal Feed draws more conclusions however. The product board calls for the application of a precautionary principle, based on which the sector can temporarily block cattle

farms. In addition, in the event of similar calamities, the board would like to set up a crisis meeting with the feed sector, chain links and branch organisations - as happened in the case of the subsequent beet incident.

Prevent unnecessary blockades

The product board will also be repeating a inventory carried out earlier into the use of technical auxiliary substances such as marl clay in the feed and animal feed sector. This will help determine how the risks relating to such substances can clearly identified, for example by restricting or imposing extensions to the requirements regarding the use of auxiliary materials. The product board also calls on the government to publicise the UBN-files, to release data from the authorities and to take data generated by companies and product boards into account. This can help prevent unnecessary blocking of farms.

The Dutch and English version of the "Assessment incident dioxin contaminated potato by-products" can be read on the product board's website: www.pdv.nl. In response to the review of the report by the board, the PDV is preparing a proposal to tighten up its policy of sanctions regarding GMP+-certified companies.

Exploring the board's future

The Product Board Animal Feed will be exploring its strategic future. Part of this survey will deal with the need for a product board and which tasks and duties this organisation can expect to face in the future. This study will be carried out on request of the business community and the government. They want more transparency and clarity about the effectiveness of the organisation before the cabinet and parliament can take any further decisions. This study will cover all product boards and boards for craft trades.

Support base

Subjects to be highlighted by this study include matters such as responsibility for the general and sector based importance of activities carried out by the product board and research into the support base existing within the sector. The commitment of businesses in a non-organisational form in activities of the product boards and participation and representation of employer and employee organisations will also be investigated. The inventory is also intended to produce a deeper insight into the opportunities for far reaching cooperation between product boards and the significance of economic developments for the Product Board Animal Feed. The cabinet wants the results of the report to be released before the end of 2005.

The Product Board Animal Feed together with other arable product boards has already drawn up a vision entitled Towards 2010. This can be read in Dutch on www.pdv.nl.

Thai cane molasses branch wants

Thailand has a long history as one of the major suppliers of compound feed ingredient tapioca, also known as manioc. There is a chance that Dutch animal feed will shortly also contain Thai molasses - as Thailand increasingly views Europe as a very attractive market.

Tapioca is produced from the starchy root of the manioc. This woody shrub, cassava, originates in South America. The starch has a binding quality and one of its uses is as an energy source in compound feeds. Compound feed for pigs, for example, can consist of up to 25% of tapioca, depending on the price of other ingredients. The majority of tapioca destined for the animal feed industry comes from Thailand. It forms one of the country's main export products - and one Thailand depends highly on. The

Netherlands imported in total 753,269 tons of tapioca last year, 587,635 tons of which from Thailand.

Less tapioca

Tapioca is popular as it is a relatively cheap source of starch compared to grain. However falling grain prices in Europe have caused exports of tapioca to the Netherlands to drop dramatically in recent years. While Thailand exported some 1,814,059 tons to the Netherlands in 1999, this figure had dropped to 324,146 in 2002.

Last year's 587,635 tons showed a slight upturn. Thailand also exported tapioca in recent years to South-Korea, Taiwan and China as a raw material for animal feed and for alcohol production.

Molasses

Molasses is also exported, up until now not to Europe. Apart from some occasional shipments in the past, most is destined to other Asian countries. China in particular is a huge importer of Thai molasses. Molasses is a by-product of sugar cane preparation for alcohol production. Rum for example, is made from molasses. The most important sugar cane grower in Thailand processes a fifth of the total Thai production of sugar cane. It's possible that this sugar cane producer will shortly be exporting molasses to the Dutch market. Until recently, molasses for the European market was mainly sourced in Pakistan. Increased demand for Pakistani molasses from India - that receives government aid for the production of alcohol as a fuel - is forcing European importers to find alternative suppliers, such as Thailand.

GMP+ -assurance required

If Thai producers and exporters of cane molasses intend to supply Dutch animal feed producers, they must comply with the prevailing regulations for safe animal feed according to GMP+. For instance, molasses can only be shipped to GMP certified companies if the terminal used to store the molasses and the exporters are also



Cane molasses transport

Quality impulse ZG Raiffeisen thanks

ZG Raiffeisen eG Karlsruhe has been GMP+ -certified for all production sites since 2002. ZG Raiffeisen is an agricultural co-operative, concentrated on buying and selling items such as animal feed (mainly grain), seeds, crop protection agents, and machines. The sphere of enterprise covers the Baden region in South Germany.

The introduction of GMP+ has meant an enormous impulse to the quality assurance policy in our company. Particularly in relation to the collection, storage and transshipment of raw materials used to produce animal feed. The fundament of our quality management system was laid down already in 1996 with DIN NEN ISO 9001.

For quality management, ZG Raiffeisen has its own Risk & Quality Management department. The implementation of GMP+ in the region was the responsibility of fifteen quality managers, in close co-operation with the silo managers. All our employees are so well aware of the GMP+ -system, that auditors from the certifying body SGS-ICS can hold high-level discussions about quality assurance on the work floor.

The introduction of GMP+ means more conscious treatment of grain in the silos. Greater attention is paid than before to the

possible hazards and risks involved with the product. Hygiene standards for storage have been intensified. Plus, detailed registration has made the process of receiving, storing and processing the product far more transparent.

Our suppliers, the farmers, and the traders associated to the quality management system, have become more aware of their individual responsibilities. The farmers realise that they are also a link in the food safety chain. ZG Raiffeisen has initiated a quality assurance project themed around 'Cultivation, harvest and on farm storage', so farmers can join our quality management system. Via ZG Raiffeisen, ten other trading companies (suppliers) have also been awarded GMP+ certification.

GMP+ has a positive impact. Our quality standards are subjected to permanent inspections and improvements based on customer audits and internal audits with the emphasis on hygiene, traceability and registration. This consistent approach to quality assurance has enhanced Raiffeisen's image and strengthened our market position.

Traceability of a bulk product such as grain naturally has limitations. In Germany certification according to GMP11 is unrealistic for a large number of farms. Farms in the South in

GMP+

certified. Sugar factories must also meet quality assurance standards as contained in GMP+.

Many sugar cane factories are working hard on the implementation of GMP+. Of the 33 certified companies in Thailand, the majority also supply tapioca. These companies emphasise the advantages of having GMP-regulations. Their operational management has become more efficient and thanks to the quality assurance system, registration and traceability of products flows is better and easier.

Mushroom stalks not animal feed

Mushroom stalks are not animal feed but a waste product. The Product Board Animal Feed has therefore amended GMP+ regulations and placed mushroom stalks and mashed mushrooms on the negative list. The Board has made this move to prevent these products entering trade chains as a feedstuff.

Mushroom stalks may possibly be a hazardous waste material, as the pesticide concentration may be higher than permitted. The PDV strongly advises farmers not to purchase mushroom stalks or mashed mushrooms or use these substances as animal feed. If farmers notice these products being offered as animal feed, they are urgently requested to report this to the Food and Non-food Authority and the PDV, stating the relevant details to enable the authorities to take action.

to GMP+



particular are just too small-scale. However, quality assurance is possible. The ultimate goal is achieving maximum traceability. To reach this goal the co-operative took samples for the first time in the harvest of

2004 from each consignment of moist conserved maize so the traceability chain can be followed back to the farm.

The only thing missing now is a method of quick measurement that can be used in practice to identify and analyse any contamination, such as mycotoxin. Time is a crucial factor in risk limitation.

Stefan Hodapp,
Quality Manager Raiffeisen-Gruppe

German QS accepts GMP+

The German quality assurance system QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH has accepted the GMP+-standard for raw materials, premixes and compound feed producers as equivalent to QS regulations. This offers advantages for GMP+ certified producers who supply to farms covered by the QS system. Whereas previously an independent audit was required, acceptance of GMP+ means Dutch companies are now exempt from this requirement.

A large number of QS farms in Germany and the Netherlands purchase animal feed from suppliers who are GMP+-certified. The guarantees offered by GMP+ for animal feed production were reason enough for the QS to accept the system. This positive assessment covers both the content of the standard as well as certification and audits by independent bodies.



Pleased to have achieved acceptance, Johan den Hartog of the PDV shakes hands with QS-director Hermann-Josef Nienhoff

Part of acceptance is that QS is now able to request audit reports from the various companies. Companies must submit all audits to QS on request. GMP+-certified animal feed companies are recognised as QS-worthy thanks to this acceptance.

Preventing beet pulp incidents

The dioxin affair had just been dealt with when the animal feed sector was confronted by a new case of contamination in a raw material. Last November, bone fragments were discovered in German beet pulp and later also in Dutch pulp. However, a quick response by the sector and the Product Board Animal Feed prevented contamination of animal feed.

The beet pulp contamination was probably caused by the use of bone phosphate as a fertilizer. As a precautionary measure the use of German beet pulp was stopped. The product board avoided spreading the contaminated products already in circulation by implementing a monitoring protocol to be carried out prior to delivery (quarantine). A tighter regime of inspection for German beet pulp was also introduced with double sample taking and analysis.

The product board also named five companies in Germany from where GMP+-certified companies were no longer allowed to source beet pulp. At the same time a rigorous monitoring programme for materials of other origin, including the Netherlands, was applied. When this programme discovered bone fragments in a Dutch

consignment, the same protocol was immediately applied to Dutch beet pulp.

Worried

The product board used a special audit team to carry out inspections at the German companies concerned. This team contained representatives of the certification bodies concerned, the business community and the product board. Edwin van Bussel, team member on behalf of PDV, was impressed by the co-operation shown by the German sugar sector. "The sector was worried. The Germans made every effort to prevent any further negative impact on the feed sector." Thanks to the rapid deployment of the audit team, 1000 consignments of beet pulp were subjected to double sampling and analysis in a very short time. Eleven consignments showed positive, including one of Dutch origin. These eleven consignments have since been destroyed.

In reaction to the beet pulp affair the board has decided to reinforce the monitoring standards by imposing fines for non-observance of the sampling and analysis obligations. The positive experience gained from using the special rapid reaction audit team has prompted an expansion of GMP+-regulations in this respect, so the team's services can be used more often.

Stricter checks on animal feed transport

Animal feed transport faces stricter controls in the future. The Product Board Animal Feed and Transport and Logistics the Netherlands (TLN) recently decided this. The tighter controls will be seen in the form of more random inspections. The maximum 24 hour prior warning given previously by the certifying bodies will no longer apply. In addition, certifying bodies will be inspecting more bulk vehicles at the entrance to companies in future, so inspections can be carried out more effectively.

From 1st July, a pilot project of intensified inspection will be run for a year. If the pilot is successful, GMP-regulations for transport will definitely be



amended. This measure is also expected to reduce costs for transporters of animal feed. This tighter regime is a result of a protocol drawn up for transport of animal feed by road. The

Product Board Animal Feed is involved in harmonising GMP-regulations for transport with foreign branch organisations in the transport sector. Many foreign transporters also participate in GMP. A total of 2100 carriers are GMP-certified, including 961 in the Netherlands.

Targeted action

The product board and TLN have stated that the vast majority of transport companies observe the quality requirements included in GMP regulations. This is contrary to reports about structural problems with animal feed transport. A few exceptions fail to observe the regulations. Last year thirteen GMP-certificates were suspended and three permanently withdrawn in the Dutch and German transport sector. In addition some 50 transporters gave up GMP-certification on their own request.

The product board attributes this development to the fact that it is becoming increasingly difficult to comply with the regulations for certain companies. Despite this the board will remain alert and calls on companies to report any

Safe Feed Safe Food

The Product Board Animal Feed uses the GMP+ system to facilitate an animal feed quality guarantee worthy of HACCP throughout the entire chain, from raw material to transport and livestock farming. Inspection and certification are carried out by independent organisations.

irregularities. This will allow specific action to be taken against companies showing non-compliance, and who therefore risk seriously damaging food safety. In reaction to recent cases of forgeries of GMP-certificates for road transport, the product board is taking steps to trace those responsible and



Drying feed products risk-free

The Product Board Animal Feed offers GMP+ - certified animal feed companies a detailed report and simple calculation model, which can be used to estimate the risks involved in drying feed. The model gives an overview into risk factors in the drying process, such as fuels, combustion installations and drying conditions.

Direct drying of fodder is an often-used production process. The new calculation model provides animal feed producers with information on how to direct dry raw material without any unacceptable risks. Only accepted fuels must be used such as natural gas, butane or light fuel oil. If the drying process is not carried out according to GMP+ - guidelines, the feed will be rejected, until additional guarantees can be provided. The implementation of the calculation model and the backup report excludes the future use of waste products in drying processes under GMP+ - regulations.

This is the first time information about the risks involved in drying feed has been detailed sector-wide and publicised. The study was motivated by previous incidents of dioxin contamination in feedstuffs such as citrus pulp and bread meal. Research was carried out by CCL Research on behalf of the Product Board Animal Feed. The report Study into drying processes of animal feed raw materials and HACCP and the calculation model can be read (in Dutch) on the product board's website: www.pdv.nl.

take legal action. The product board will continue to report such instances to interested parties via its website www.pdv.nl.

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